

Farm to School

What is Farm to School?

The term “farm to school” is generally understood to include efforts that connect schools with local or regional producers in order to serve local or regionally produced foods in school cafeterias. USDA considers farm to school to be inclusive of many types of producers, such as farmers, ranchers, and fishermen.

In addition to procurement activities, food, agriculture and nutrition-based educational efforts that span a host of hands-on experiential activities, such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes, are also included in the concept of farm to school.

Benefits of Farm to School

- Strengthen children's and communities' knowledge about, and attitudes toward, agriculture, food, nutrition and the environment.
- Increase children's participation in the school meals program and consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- Benefit school food budgets, if planning and menu choices are made consistent with seasonal availability of fresh and minimally processed whole foods.
- Support economic development across numerous sectors and promote job creation.
- Increase market opportunities for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors, and food manufacturers.
- Decrease the distance between producers and consumers, thus promoting food security while reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and reliance on oil.

Resources

National Farm to School Website - <http://www.farmtoschool.org/>

USDA's Farm to School Website - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/Default.htm>

Check out Indiana's MarketMaker for listings of farmers - <http://in.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>

Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food - <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>

Indiana Department of Education Farm to School Website - <http://www.doe.in.gov/student-services/nutrition/farm-school>

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